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Via ECFS
Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

**Re: In the Matter of Petition of USTelecom for Forbearance Pursuant to
47 U.S.C. Section 160(c); WC Docket No. 18-141; Category 1**

Dear FCC,

I run a small business out of my house. My only choice for access was AT&T, or incidental to TV service from Com-cast. It was a disaster--not just the non-competitive pricing, but the required bundles of services. And when things screwed up (as will happen with the best of networks) the "support" was to climb one's way up an intricate web of choices to end up speaking to someone in India (and later the Philippines.) It got so bad that we began prevailing on our more linguistically capable neighbors to try to get our problems described to AT&T and the responses interpreted! Then---the FCC opened up the last hundred yards between the AT&T poles and the customers to new local competitors. While AT&T never remedied its support defects, the price increases and bundling stopped. Because one can FIND the in-town competitive provider, and its other local (but not in-town) competitor hires LOCAL PEOPLE WHO ACTUALLY HAVE WORKED DELIVERING THE SERVICE, when we need installation, service support, or want to explore expansion--we can do it with a single brief call. No phone trees. No linguistic barriers. I can't tell you how valuable it is for a small business to make a single call, have no shunting around of responsibility, and few wait times. And that, as much as price, is what local competitors lead on. My connection (used not just for communication, but for research and development of my consulting product) has just become fiber. The revenues have gone up 400% (as the IRS is finding out when I have to file quarterly tax.) The percentage improvement is just about = to the improvement in speed over DSL.

This story ought to be allowed to keep repeating itself. Especially in California's Great Valley --- and I have spent 5 days within the last 30 in Modesto-Manteca-Turlock (Jeff Denham's district.) From talking to people all day I can tell you that they CAN'T yet do what I do because of the lack of internet infrastructure in rural California. That is only grown out by local small outfits. If we are going to get the jobs out there where folks can still afford houses, and enjoy a balanced rural life, don't stifle competition by giving AT&T the ability to stifle.

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